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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

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STATE review(s) completed.

10 March 1970

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Approved For Release 2003/05/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A015700100001-6

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Approved For Release 2003/05/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A015700100001-6

No. 0059/70
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Cyprus: President Makarios remains in complete control after his narrow escape from assassination on Sunday.

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All Greek Cypriot political parties have denounced the attempted assassination. Rauf Denktash, spokesman for the Turkish Cypriots in the long-drawn-out intercommunal talks, has also issued a statement deplored such acts. A crowd of about 10,000 Greek Cypriots demonstrated in support of Makarios in Nicosia on 9 March.

Makarios has not yet revealed whatever plans he may have for action against renewed terrorism. Continued temporizing would expose him to other attempts on his life.

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India: Increasing political ferment in violence-wracked West Bengal may bring about a collapse of the state's governing coalition.

The Bangla Congress, the most moderate and the second largest party in the coalition, has threatened to pull out next week. The announcement has thrown the long-shaky political situation into a fresh state of turbulence.

The militant Communist Party/Marxist has by far the largest representation of the 14-odd leftist political groups in the present coalition. Primarily through their control of the police, the Marxists have been steadily increasing their power in the state at the expense not only of the opposition but of their own coalition partners. Led by the Bangla Congress, most of the members of the coalition have been castigating the Marxists for making a mockery of law-and-order, but up to now they have been reluctant to pull out of the coalition. They fear they would be unable to put together a viable alternative government, and they apparently concede that new elections would bring the Marxists additional legislative seats.

The Marxists have threatened to unleash a "campaign of terror" if they are forced out of power, but it is unlikely that they would want to create a situation in which the central government would have to move in--possibly with the army. The situation could get out of hand quickly, however, and a Marxist-organized march on Calcutta, culminating in a huge rally on 15 March, could erupt into serious violence.

For her part, Prime Minister Gandhi has been reluctant to intervene in the state's affairs. "President's rule," direct control by the central government, was resorted to in February 1968. Although peace was restored, the move eventually became a political liability for the ruling Congress

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Party's state organization. In a state where her party has already been seriously weakened, Mrs. Gandhi is anxious to avoid making another political blunder.

The Marxists may ultimately be willing to work out some sort of modus vivendi with their partners in order to salvage the coalition. Any such agreement is unlikely to bring about long-term stability, however.

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El Salvador: Preliminary returns point to a landslide victory for the government in last Sunday's congressional and municipal elections.

They indicate that the official Party of National Conciliation has won more than 60 percent of the congressional seats and control of local governments in 12 of the 14 department capitals. The "victory" over Honduras last July and the continued border incidents worked in the government's favor, but government pressure on the voters was probably also a factor in the unexpectedly good showing of the official party.

The government will face the immediate problem of countering charges by the Christian Democratic opposition of voting irregularity. It also will have to decide whether to push ahead with the legislative reform program begun last November after the Christian Democrats joined with dissident members of the government party to overthrow the unprogressive Assembly leadership.

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USSR-Sudan: Moscow has reneged on trade commitments made last November but seems to be moving ahead with its economic assistance program.

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The Soviet press has reported, however, that the Soviet minister of foreign trade is expected to go to Sudan in the near future to negotiate a trade agreement for 1970-75.

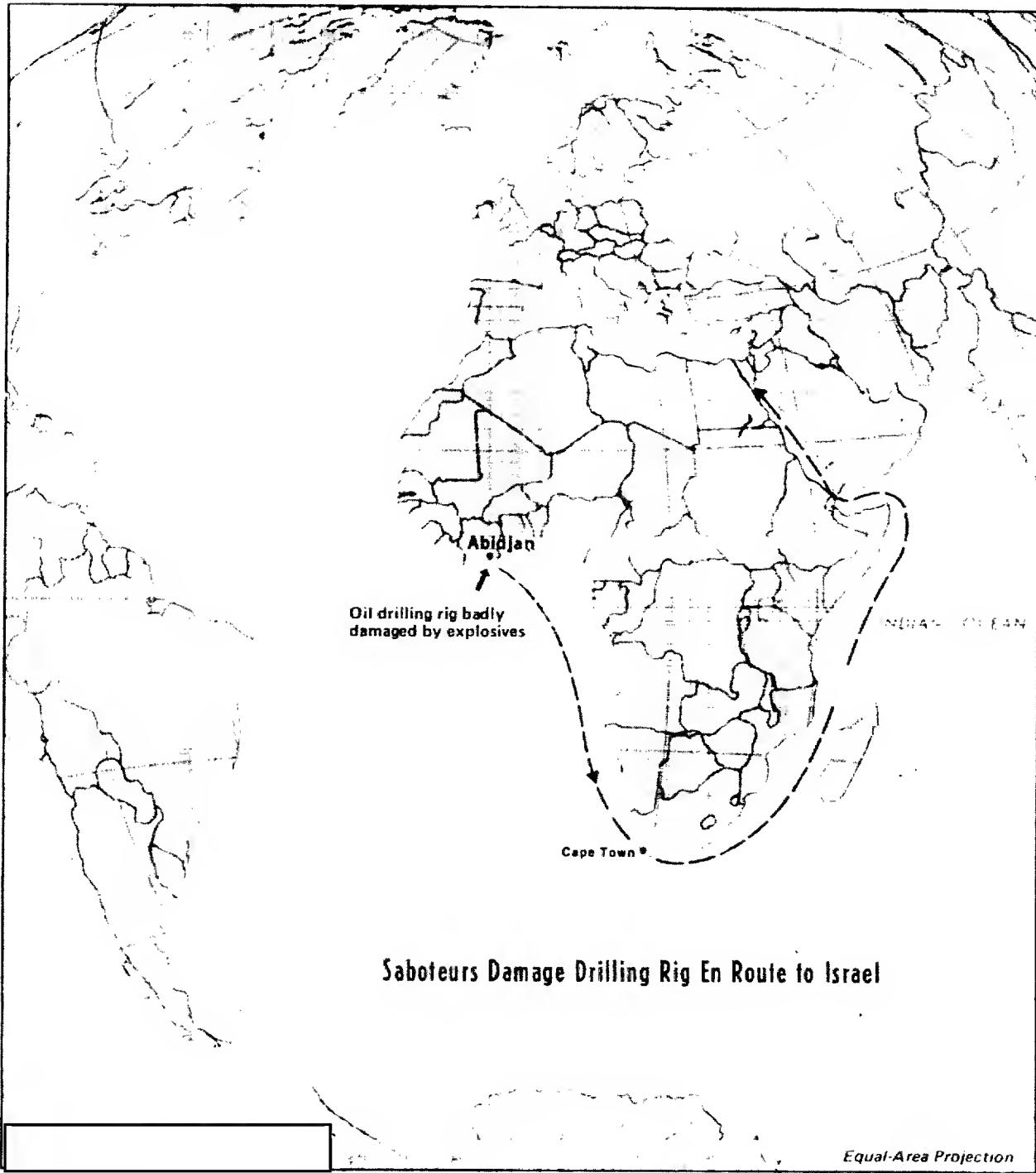
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Economic assistance agreements made in November, however, apparently are being implemented. Twelve Soviet experts recently arrived to advise on ways to better utilize Sudanese railways

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NOTES

Communist China: Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung and his designated heir Lin Piao have once again disappeared into the shadows; this time they have not been noted in public for five months. In fact, they have appeared only three times, at ceremonies last October, in the past ten months. Infrequent public appearances have become a style of leadership in China; although Mao may well be slowing down because of his advanced years, there have been no reports that his most recent absence has been caused by ill health.

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Israel-Egypt: The sabotage in Abidjan of the Canadian oil drilling rig under contract to Tel Aviv could invite an Israeli reaction. According to the US Embassy in Abidjan, the rig was badly damaged below the waterline by explosives reportedly set by three frogmen. The Israelis will probably suspect a link to the Egyptians in the operation and could strike a retaliatory blow, possibly at some oil-related facility in Egypt.

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